

Fall Fun Day events at the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge

by Candace Ward



Make the most of autumn—come out to Kenai NWR for Sept. 27 Fall Fun Day. Photo of road with trees on each side turning into the fall colors. Photo Credit: Jetta Minerva/USFWS

Fall is such a wonderful time to be outdoors—whether you go birding, berry picking, hiking or fishing, each day is a feast for the eyes as the landscape changes dramatically

You can enjoy this season even more by coming out for the Refuge's annual Fall Fun Day. The event takes place on Saturday September 27 from 10am to 2pm at the Refuge Visitor Center and Environmental Education (EE) Center on Ski Hill Road in Soldotna.

This year's schedule of events includes:

10am – 2pm: Head to the EE Center for family activities that will focus on birding, hiking & orienteering. A special kid's scavenger hunt will take place outdoors and once completed, each child receives a prize. Also for kids there will be a fun and creative craft project. Sign up for hiking and birding related door prizes donated by Alaska Geographic. Complimentary goodies and hot drinks will also be provided.

1pm – 2pm: Hiking the Kenai Peninsula Slide Show - Join photographer and naturalist, Taz Tally, as he relates his hiking adventures on the Kenai Peninsula. His new book, 50 Hikes in Alaska's Kenai Penin-

sula, will be available for purchase and for him to sign after his program.

10am – 4pm: The Visitor Center will feature two films, Alaska's Coolest Animals and Alaska's Coolest Birds, alternating on the hour between 10am and 4pm. These award winning films highlight the cinematography work of Homer wildlife photographer, Daniel Zatz.

For those that enjoy outdoor activities, the following hikes and walks are offered. Please call 262-7021 to pre-register as space is limited.

10am – Noon: Centennial Trail – 2.2 miles for ages 16 and older - Hike with geologist/photographer Taz Tally as he shares the geology and ecology of the Kenai lowlands. He will also give tips for photographing wildlife and landscapes.

11am – Noon: Forest Loop – ¾ mile walk for ages 10 and older – Go bird watching with wildlife biological technician Toby Burke and look for fall migrants and year round resident birds.

Noon – 12:45 pm: Keen Eye Nature Trail – 1/4 mile walk for all ages – Have fun exploring nature with Conservation Intern Eve Smallwood using hand lenses and doing fun activities to discover the subtle mysteries in nature.

2 – 2:45 pm: Keen Eye Nature Trail – 1/4 mile walk for all ages – Go exploring with education specialist Michelle Ostrowski to discover through a variety of activities how fall changes affect wildlife and people and signal us to get ready for winter.

So make sure you go outdoors to enjoy autumn's delights before the snow flies by joining us at our Fall Fun Day.

Candace Ward is a park ranger, who leads the Refuge's information and education programs. For more information about Fall Fun Day, contact Kenai National Wildlife Refuge at 262-7021. Previous Refuge Previous Refuge Notebook columns can be viewed on the Web at <http://www.fws.gov/refuge/kenai/>.